



PO Box 20 020
Wellington, 6242
2020.org.nz

30 May 2017

New Zealand's Digital Inclusion Challenge: Beyond Computers in Homes

20/20 Trust has operated the national Computers in Homes programme since 2001, helping more than 19,000 families build digital skills and confidence, connect to the internet and participate more fully in the digital world. In May 2016, the government advised that funding of the programme in its present form would not continue after 30 June 2017. In this document we outline our preparation for this transition and our view of the future for digital inclusion in New Zealand.

Our new approach retains the core elements of Computers in Homes that have worked well in the past - local community engagement and building digital confidence - and offers greater flexibility in how the needs of specific communities are met.

Over the last 12 months, we have modularised our digital inclusion programmes to enable them to be delivered in different combinations in response to the needs of individual communities. The three core components - access to a digital device, internet connection and skills/confidence building - have been specified and we have run several pilots using individual components. Our current programmes now use this modular approach for delivery of digital skills and inclusion, and we are confident that we can assemble programmes to meet local community needs.

Evidence supporting the importance of government investment in digital inclusion continues to build. Over the last 2 months this has included:

- Building a Digital Nation launched by Hon Simon Bridges March 2017
- Digital New Zealanders: research commissioned by MBIE and DIA, April 2017
- Internet NZ and 20/20 Trust beta version of Digital Divide Map, April 2017
- Computers in Homes Half-Year Report, April 2017
- Digital Inclusion in New Zealand: Assessing Government policy approaches and initiatives, Google Fellowship report, Innovation Partnership April 2017
- Digital Technologies in New Zealand Schools, Research NZ and 20/20 Trust May 2017

The data in the Digital Technologies in Schools research suggests that there are still 40,000 families with school-age children that do not have access to the Internet at home, including 120,000 children in year four and above. This drives a huge wedge into New Zealand society, the effect of which will impact upon education, employability and social deprivation for generations.

Government is committed to the provision of online services and has set a target of 70% of transactions with government completed online by the end of 2017; by December 2016 the achievement was 58%. The digitally disadvantaged are among the highest users of government services, and are increasingly unlikely to be connected by the private sector. Our experience is that as more people connect online, the "tail" gets harder to reach.

20/20 Trust has a unique national network, know-how and experience to help people connect to the digital world, creating better outcomes in education, health, employment and social justice. We work with established organisations such as local authorities, libraries, schools, REAPs and other ACE providers, health providers, iwi groups and local community trusts, to ensure our digital literacy programmes are shaped to meet local needs and are delivered by trusted people working for trusted

organisations. Local delivery is critical for effective digital inclusion investment and we are committed to working with others to make an impact.

The national Computers in Homes programme provided more than 70% of our income, and without that funding from 1 July, we need to significantly reduce the working hours for our team members throughout New Zealand. In taking these steps, our aim is to maintain our network at reduced scale so that we are able to respond to future digital inclusion challenges and opportunities.

At the same time, we are continuing our discussions with government and others to secure funding for programmes that increase digital inclusion in digitally disadvantaged communities, using our know-how and experience to support other organisations to meet the needs of these communities.

We will maintain our delivery of other digital inclusion programmes, while seeking additional funding. These programmes include:

Computers in Homes graduates from the national programme receive 12 months technical support and subsidised internet, and the programme will continue operating in twenty different regions, from the Far North to Southland, until June 2018.

Refugee Connect provides a digital device and internet connection for 130 refugee families each year, in collaboration with local training providers.

Stepping UP provides short community-based digital skills and confidence training through over 60 delivery partners (mainly public libraries).

Spark Jump pre-pay internet service is provided by 20/20 Trust to families with school-aged children, on behalf of the Spark Foundation. The opportunity to access the internet from \$15 per month is proving very popular with families who cannot afford monthly 'on account' services.

KiwiSkills provides digital skills training for the workplace. By February 2018, we expect to have enrolled a cumulative total of 7,500 students in the programme, in collaboration with 75 delivery partners (mainly secondary schools and PTEs - private training establishments). Graduates receive an internationally recognised qualification and can also earn NCEA level 2 credits.

20/20 Trust will continue discussions with the government about the importance of digital inclusion, and we are hopeful that the government will recognise the value of further investment to achieve economic and social outcomes. We want to continue offering our community-based programmes until New Zealand is a truly digital society and economy.